Christina Franco

One-third more 8th-graders and one-quarter more 10th-graders are smoking today than four years ago. In the magazine world, every person that young boys and girls look up, have a cigarette in their hands. No matter what anybody says, cigarette ads hook children and show them it is okay to smoke.

Celebrities are getting put into the ads to promote smoking. Once a teenager sees an ad with a celebrity that they look up to, they automatically look at it. The teenagers then say how good the celebrity looks, but on the bad side, this certain celebrity is promoting the sale of cigarettes. These children want to be just like this person and then think it is cool to smoke since their idol smokes. When a teenager is watching his/her favorite show, there is at least one main character who is smoking. When a kid is watching this show, they don’t think anything is wrong with it because teenage smoking is so common. If the main character in this show is the popular jock that falls in love with the head cheerleader, the person watching the show automatically thinks this can happen to them. They want to be just like the characters, which means that they see that smoking is okay and maybe it will make a girl or guy like them.

Cigarette ads make teens believe that smoking can relieve all their pain and insecurities. Ads give teens the message that smoking can help them become attractive, desirable, and independent; which is not true. Cigarette ads make teenagers feel pressured. If you seen a commercial of a young girl smoking and she was very happy and everything seemed so perfect, wouldn’t that make you want to try it? Well that is what cigarette ads do; they are trying to persuade teens that cigarette smoking is taking the easy way out. Tobacco companies also try to convince women that smoking can slim you out. This is a false fact but it does make young teens believe that they will be able to lose weight by smoking the certain brand of cigarettes.

One of the tobacco company’s new approaches of advertisement is the introduction of candy-flavored cigarettes. Kool cigarettes have come up with names like "Caribbean Chill," "Midnight Berry," "Mocha Taboo" and "Mintrigue." These kinds of changes definitely pull teens into smoking because it seems interesting to have favored cigarettes. Camel has also advertised a bunch of new flavored cigarettes, including a pineapple and coconut-flavored cigarette called "Kauai Kolada" and a citrus-flavored cigarette called "Twista Lime." In November 2004, they introduced Camel "Winter Blends" in flavors including "Winter Warm Toffee" and "Winter MochaMint. Young teens also would look at this brand of cigarettes and think just because they are flavored, they aren’t as bad for you as regular menthol or non-menthol are. Cigarette brands like these are deliberately making flavored kinds of cigarettes because they know teens will get interested and will want to try it.

The Chicago researchers looked in magazines, tracking 12,000 cigarette ads placed at a cost of $1.01 billion in the 36 most widely read magazines from 1997 through 2000. Tobacco companies need teen involvement in smoking because that is where they most of their sales. Tobacco companies advertise cigarette smoking to be cool, which attracts young teens to start smoking.